



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

OCT 28 2003

MEMORANDUM

OFFICE OF THE
ADMINISTRATOR

SUBJECT: Opportunity for Joint Planning and Priority-Setting
with States and Tribes

TO: Regional Administrators

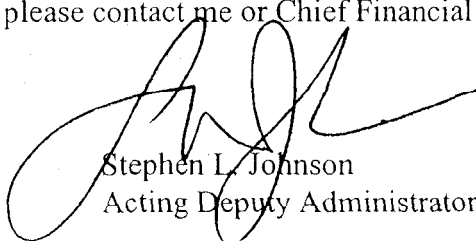
As you develop your Regional Plans in the coming months, I encourage you to engage your state and tribal partners. Early involvement and support from our partners are essential to the quality and utility of these plans and will enhance later discussions regarding Performance Partnership Agreements and Grants with the states. Strategic thinking about regional planning will help ensure that PPAs more realistically reflect Agency and state priorities, reduce transaction costs, and strengthen reliance on PPAs as the single agreement defining State-EPA partnerships.

At the Environmental Council of the States Summer Meeting in Salt Lake City, I announced a \$400,000 grant from EPA to ECOS to support state strategic planning, enhanced strategic engagement with EPA, and other aspects of results-based management. During the meeting, the ECOS Planning Committee reported on the EPA-ECOS Alignment and PPA Workgroups, including their recommendation to enhance state and regional interaction when developing Regional Plans. In September, the chairs of the Committee sent a letter to all the state commissioners urging them to take advantage of this opportunity.

I support the EPA-ECOS recommendation and the commitment made by the Deputy Regional Administrators and representatives at the National Programs in September to enhance the level of joint planning and priority-setting with states and, as appropriate, tribes. Regional Plans will be a key component of a more streamlined and open process for reaching agreement on operating-year priorities and regional performance commitments. The Plans also offer an opportunity to consider localized conditions and develop priorities and strategies to turn the national environmental goals and objectives in our Agency Strategic Plan into real results in your regions.

I realize that not all states will choose to engage in strategic planning discussions at this time, but, at a minimum, they should have the opportunity to review and comment on the draft Regional Plans that you are preparing this fall. You should also provide periodic opportunities for states and tribes to assess progress and adjust the priorities and strategies in your Regional Plans.

If you have questions, please contact me or Chief Financial Officer Linda Combs.



Stephen L. Johnson
Acting Deputy Administrator

Attachment